

1. (Previously submitted) A coupler for adding or removing tubulars to and from a drill string while continuing to flow drilling fluid down the drill string comprising:

(a) casing means for defining a chamber;

(b) valve means for dividing said chamber into upper and lower portions and for placing said upper and lower portions in fluid communication when said valve is open;

(c) inlet and outlet means for flowing drilling fluid into and out of said chamber;

(d) first gripping means for gripping said tubulars;

(e) second gripping means for gripping said drill string;

and

(f) said first and second gripping means being radially movable into and out of engagement with said tubulars and said drill string, respectively.

2. (New) A system for connecting and disconnecting a tubular to and from a drill string comprising:

(a) a coupler comprising a high pressure casing, a divider valve dividing the coupler into upper and lower chambers, and including means for rotating a tubular and or the drill string into and out of threaded connection;

(b) a pair of handlers each having first and second portions for gripping and releasing a tubular before and after said tubular is connected to said drill string; and

(c) power means for moving said first and second handlers vertically upwardly and downwardly relative to the vertical position of the other in a hand over hand motion.

3. (New) The system of Claim 2 wherein each of said handlers include flexible umbilical means for supplying power to said handlers.

4. (New) A coupler for connecting and disconnecting tubulars to and from a drill string while continuously recirculating drilling fluid through the drill string, the coupler comprising:

(a) chamber means for defining a pressure chamber;

(b) partition means for dividing said chamber into upper and lower portions.

(c) said partition means including valve means for placing said upper and lower portions in communication when said valve means are open;

(d) inlet and outlet means for continuously recirculating drilling fluid into and out of said chamber;

(e) first gripping means for gripping said tubulars;

(f) second gripping means for gripping said drill string;
and

(g) said upper and lower gripping means being radially movable into and out of engagement with said tubulars and said string, respectively, for connecting and disconnecting said tubulars while drilling fluid is continuously circulated into and out of said chamber.

5. (New) The coupler of Claim 4 wherein at least one of said upper and lower gripping means are positioned within said chamber.

6. (New) The coupler of Claim 4 wherein both of said upper and lower gripping means are positioned inside of said pressure chamber.

7. (New) The coupler of Claim 4 including slip means for engaging said drill string against vertical movement while permitting rotation of said drill string for continuing drilling during said connection and disconnection.

8. (New) The coupler of Claim 4 in combination with a second coupler as set forth in Claim 4, and in combination with first and second handler means connected to said first and second

couplers, respectively, including power means for moving said couplers in relative vertical motions.

9. (New) The coupler of Claim 8 wherein said power means move said first and second hand over hand motions while said drill string continuously moves vertically.

10. (New) The coupler of Claim 4 wherein said partition means and said valve means comprise a ram preventer.